

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Gayville-Volin School District
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2004-2005**

Team Members: Linda Shirley, Team Leader, Barb Boltjes, Chris Sargent, Education Specialists.

Dates of On Site Visit: January 27, 2005

Date of Report: January 29, 2005

This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by the Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

Promising Practice	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
Meets Requirements	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
Needs Improvement	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.
Out of Compliance	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
Not applicable	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

Principle 1 – General Supervision
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General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

None were listed by the district

Promising practices

The steering committee identified the following as promising practices:

The school provides an after school program for all students K-8. Accelerated Reader is an online program which students are able to use at home and at school. Class Server is available for all students to access at home and at school.

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the district uses an effective referral system. In regard to suspension and expulsion rates, the steering committee reports indicate no disabled students were suspended or expelled for more than ten days.

Validation Results**Promising practices**

Through interviews and observations the monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as promising practices under general supervision as concluded by the steering committee.

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meeting requirements under general supervision as concluded by the steering committee.

Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education
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All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3rd birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

No data sources were listed.

Meets requirements

The steering committee reported the provision of a free appropriate public education for all children.

Validation Results**Meets requirements**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meeting requirements under free appropriate education as concluded by the steering committee.

Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for

evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

No data sources were listed.

Meets Requirement

The steering committee concluded the district provides written notice and consent for all evaluations. The district evaluation team is comprised of two or more of the following: special educator, speech clinician, preschool teacher, general educator and administrator. In 18 of 18 files sufficient evaluation data was available to determine eligibility. The MDT report was available in 18 of 18 files of students with learning disabilities. The MDT contains all required content.

Needs improvement

The steering committee concluded 7 of 18 files reviewed did not have parent input into the evaluation process. Functional evaluation data was available in all areas of suspected disability in 13 of 18 files reviewed. Specific functional assessment skills were summarized into a written report in 12 of 18 files reviewed.

Validation Results

Meets Requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meeting requirements under appropriate evaluation as concluded by the steering committee.

Needs improvement

The monitoring team agrees with areas identified as needing improvement under appropriate evaluation as concluded by the steering committee. Since the onsite visit last spring and through file reviews the monitoring team found parent input into the evaluation is being documented. Functional evaluations are being completed and a summarized written report of skills is being completed.

Out of compliance

24:05:25:04. Evaluation procedures. School districts shall ensure, at a minimum, that evaluation procedures include the following:

(8) The evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child's special education and related services needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified;

Students sixteen, or younger if needed are required to have a transition evaluation. Two of four files reviewed for transition showed no transition evaluations for students 16 or older.

Issues Requiring Immediate Attention

ARSD 24:05:25:06. Reevaluations

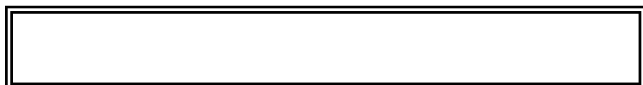
24:05:22:03. Certified child.

A certified child is a child in need of special education or special education and related services who has received a multidisciplinary evaluation and has an individual education program formulated and approved by a local placement committee. Documentation supporting a child's disabling condition as defined by Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act must be maintained by the school district for

verification of its annual federal child count. This definition applies to all eligible children ages 3 to 21, inclusive, and to only those children under the age of 3 who are in need of prolonged assistance.

The monitoring team identified the following issue:

A student was reevaluated and the disability was changed from specific learning disability to emotional disturbance. The report date is 11/26/03. Evaluations on the prior notice to be evaluated were BASC, CBC and a previous psychological evaluation. Evaluations completed were the BASC and CBC. There were no scores listed on the psychologist report, nor in the multidisciplinary team report. There was no documentation to support the student's performance was 2.0 standard deviations or more below the norm in emotional functions, as measured in school, home, and community on nationally normed measures.



Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

No data sources listed.

Meets requirements

The steering committee stated parents were provided with the parent rights booklet in accordance with regulation and district policy 100% of the time. The steering committee noted parents have been fully informed in their native language or another mode of communication of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought. One student was evaluated using an interpreter. Parents of children in need of special education and related services are afforded the opportunity to inspect and review all educational records concerning the identification, evaluation and educational placement of the child and the provision of a free appropriate public education. The steering committee reported no complaints have been filed against the district.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meeting requirements for procedural safeguards as concluded by the steering committee.

Out of Compliance

ARSD 24:05:30:15-Surrogate Parent

Each school district shall establish procedures for the assignment of a surrogate parent to ensure that the rights of a child are protected if no parent can be identified and the district, after reasonable effort, cannot discover the whereabouts of a parent or if the child is a ward of the state. At a minimum, a district's method for determining whether a child needs a surrogate parent must include the following:

(1) The identification of staff members at the district or building level responsible for referring students in need of a surrogate parent;

(2) The provision of in-service training on the criteria in this section for determining whether a child needs a surrogate parent; and

(3) The establishment of a referral system within the district for the appointment of a surrogate parent.

The district superintendent or designee shall appoint surrogate parents.

The district shall ensure that a person selected as a surrogate has no interest that conflicts with the interest of the child the surrogate represents and has knowledge and skills that ensure representation of the child. The district is responsible for the training and certification of surrogate parents and shall maintain a list of persons who may serve as surrogate parents.

A district may select as a surrogate a person who is an employee of a nonpublic agency that only provides noneducational care for the child and who meets the conflict of interest and knowledge standards in this section.

A person assigned as a surrogate may not be an employee of a public agency that is involved in the education or care of the child.

A person who otherwise qualifies to be a surrogate under the provisions of this section is not an employee of the agency solely because the person is paid by the agency to serve as a surrogate parent.

The surrogate parent may represent the student in all matters relating to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, and provision of FAPE to the students.

The district superintendent or a designee is responsible for reporting to the placement committee on the performance of the surrogate parent.

The monitoring team through interviews and the self-assessment concluded there is not a list of individuals who would serve as a surrogate parent if needed.

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The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

No data sources were listed.

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded that policies and procedures are in place to ensure an IEP is developed and in effect for each eligible student. Parents are invited to all IEP meetings.

Needs improvement

The steering committee indicated the present levels of performance in 12 of 18 files contained specific skills in the student's strengths, weakness and the student's involvement in the general curriculum. Present levels of performance were not linked to functional evaluations in 13 of 18 files. Parent input into the IEP process was documented in 16 of 18 files reviewed.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with areas identified as meeting the requirements for the development of an IEP as concluded by the steering committee.

Needs improvement

The monitoring team agrees with areas identified as needing improvement. Transition information was not documented on the prior notice in files of students 14 and older.

Out of compliance

ARSD 24:05:27:01:03 Content of Individualized Education Plan

Each student's individualized education program shall include:

(3) A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the student, or on behalf of the student, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the student:

- (a) To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals;
- (b) To be involved and progress in the general curriculum in accordance with this section and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and
- (c) To be educated and participate with other students with disabilities and nondisabled students in the activities described in this section;

(6) The projected date for the beginning of the services and modification described in this section and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of those services and modifications;

A student's IEP must contain present levels of performance based on the skill areas affected by the student's disability. The present levels of performance are based on parent input and should be a reflection of the functional assessment information gathered during the comprehensive evaluation. The areas to be addressed are required to be in the present levels of performance. In addition, how the child's disability affects his/her progress in the general curriculum must be addressed. The present levels of performance in 5 of the 22 files reviewed by the monitoring team did not document specific skill areas to be addressed. Examples of student's present levels of performance were: "written language", "math", one file had no strengths or needs in the area of the disability. Two files did not state how the disability affected involvement in the regular classroom.

The monitoring team concluded annual goals were not measurable and reasonable for the student to accomplish within one year. The monitoring team concluded 9 of 15 files did not have measurable annual goals. Examples of the district not meeting this requirement are: "... will complete assignments, attend school, eat in the commons every day"; "... will complete math skills through completion of 80% of the following goals"; and, "...will demonstrate appropriate interpersonal relationships".

The annual goal or short-term objectives must address the condition, performance and criteria. Through file reviews, the team determined that 9 of 15 student IEPs did not consistently state the criteria or condition.

Through staff and administrative interviews, the monitoring team found teachers do not receive copies of the modifications and accommodations. Teachers are not implementing modifications and accommodations for students in the regular education classroom on IEPs.

Through 5 of 15 files reviewed the monitoring team concluded the configuration of services did not consistently list service, frequency or location. The files did not list specific services. For example, “Will come to the resource room for study skills and tests 5 times a week”....” ___ will have resource staff available to her for math and English instruction. She will also have a study skills class in the resource room and will be able to come in for tests and help with assignments”.... ___ will come to the resource room during study halls and for tests”.

Through a review of student records, the justification for placement did not include an explanation of why the student could not participate with his/her non-disabled peers in 6 out of 15 files. For example, “this best fits ___ needs.” “She can be with her peers yet get assistance from resource room when needed.” “This would best fit ___ needs.”

Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

No data was listed.

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the district has policies and procedures in place for addressing the least restrictive environment for students.

Validation Results

Promising practice

The preschool program is open to all children ages three through five. Special education services are provided as appropriate from the child’s individual education team. The monitoring team observed this program and interviewed district staff that reported the program to be an effective tool in providing appropriate developmental opportunities, as well as a tool for remediating potential areas of concern and early identification of students with special needs.

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meeting requirements under least restrictive environment as concluded by the steering committee.